DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 403 658 EA 028 208

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TITLE	Inventing Better Schools: An Action Plan for Education Reform. The Jossey-Bass Education Series.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-7879-0339-6
PUB DATE	97
NOTE	294p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, 350 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94104.
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Change Strategies; *Educational Change; *Educational Improvement; Elementary Secondary Education; Learning Strategies; *School Restructuring; Standards; Student Evaluation; *Systems Approach; Teaching Methods; Total Quality Management

ABSTRACT

If schools are not changed in dramatic ways very soon, public schools will lose their place as a vital component of the American education system. The first three chapters of this book describe the crisis in American education, arguing that what the schools were designed to do no longer serves the needs of American society. The presence of educational technology is the major reason why schools must change and is a major tool to bring about that change. Chapter 4 proposes rethinking the role of schools through a focus on active learning and the issue of quality. Chapter 5 asserts that new schools cannot be invented without considering the centrality of beliefs and values. Chapters 6 and 7 take the position that the greatest barrier to school reform is that most school districts do not have the capacity to support reform at the level of school buildings and classrooms. The chapters examine ways to assess and create district capacity. Chapter 8 shows how the properties of school districts affect the operation of schools and classrooms. Changing student work to promote student engagement is the focus of chapter 9. Chapter 10 addresses issues in student evaluation. The 11th chapter presents a general discussion of the problems and prospects of leading systemic change. The final chapter offers an action plan for school reform. One table, three figures, an index, and appendices containing two sample action plans are included. (LMI)

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